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ABSTRACT

The Guilford Initiative for Training and Treatment Services (GIFTTS) Project is a collaborative effort between the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Guilford County Schools, the Department of Social Services, Juvenile Courts, the Health Department, and the Mental Health division of the local Mental Health/Development Disabilities/Substance Abuse Authority. The project creates systems change in service delivery for children with emotional and behavioral problems and their families. It promotes and models the wraparound process with children and families to create a strength-based, family-centered system of care at the community level, and it provides preservice and inservice training for involved professionals. Cross-cultural competence is a major element in the successful implementation of the wraparound process. An example of this effort is being piloted in the University of North Carolina's undergraduate elementary education program. The 4-semester program is implemented on campus and in community professional development school sites. Faculty and doctoral students involved with GIFTTS identified key components about the wraparound process that needed to be incorporated into the existing curriculum. They created five content strands to be part of the program: child; family; teacher/school; agencies; and legal issues. The Department of Curriculum and Instruction is piloting the curriculum during the 1997-1998 academic year with five elementary education cohorts. Evaluation will occur in the summer of 1998. An appendix presents a comprehensive table for each content strand. (Contains 13 references.) (SM)

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How Changing Views about Collaborative Service Delivery Models for Children and Their Families Affect Preservice Teacher Education Programs: The GIFTTS Project

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How Changing Views about Collaborative Service Delivery Models for Children and Their Families Affect Preservice Teacher Education Programs: The GIFTTS Project

The Guilford Initiative for Training and Treatment Services (GIFTTS) Project is a collaborative effort between the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Guilford County Schools, the Department of Social Services, Juvenile Courts, the Health Department, and the Mental Health division of the local Mental Health/Development Disabilities/Substances Abuse authority. The purpose of the project is to create systems change in service delivery for children with emotional and behavioral problems and their families. The Project promotes and models the use of the wraparound process with children and their families to create a strengths-based, family-centered system of care at the community level, and it provides preservice and inservice training for professionals involved in the process.

Wraparound Services

The wraparound process is a way of providing services for children and their families that uses a strengths-based approach. It removes the professional from the traditional role of determining a family's weaknesses and prescribing the services to meet those needs. Instead, the process involves families as full partners in identifying their strengths and their needs, setting goals, and finding ways to meet those goals (Dunst & Trivette, 1994; Eber, Nelson, & Miles, 1997).

The wraparound services process incorporates three core principles: it is culturally responsive; it uses a strengths-based approach that is family-centered; and it is community based (VanDenBerg & Grealish, 1996). The process focuses on developing and using both agency-based services (formal supports) and community-level resources (informal supports) through collaboration and coordination involving the family, community members, and professionals to build on the strengths and respond to the needs identified by the family in all life domains. Life

domains include living arrangements, family, social, emotional/psychological, educational, vocational, safety, legal, social/ recreational and medical (Eber, 1997, September).

The wraparound process uses a team approach. The team, made up the child, the family, and individuals who know the child and family, work together to develop a plan to meet the goals and needs established by the family. Along with the family and child, the team might include relatives, friends, and professionals who know the child and family (i.e. teachers, mental health professionals) (VanDenBerg & Grealish, 1996). The team has a leader who is responsible for coordinating services and activities related to the child's program.

Cross-cultural Competence

Cross-cultural competency is defined by Cross, Bazron, Dennis, and Isaacs (1989) as "...a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enable the system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations" (p. 13). Competency in cross-cultural issues enables the professional to interact effectively with families from cultures that are different from their own. It is also a major element in the successful implementation of the wraparound process.

The process of developing cross-cultural competence begins with the acknowledgment that differences exist, the development of self-awareness, and the understanding of one's own values, beliefs and assumptions (Baird, 1996; Cross, et al,1989; Hanson, Lynch, & Wayman, 1990). Shelton and Stepanek (1994) suggest that this self-examination of one's cultural underpinnings is a continuous, lifelong process. Lynch (1992) proposes using a Personal Cultural Journey to begin exploration of one's own heritage and culture as a first step in developing cross-cultural competency. This exploration might be done through oral histories, family records and photographs, and other documents. This process is followed be a study

of values, beliefs and behaviors of one's culture and how one personally identifies with each.

The next step in the process to develop cultural competence is to gain knowledge and understanding about the cultures of families with whom the professional will work. Lynch (1992) suggests reading, using a cultural guide, participating in the day to day life of the culture, and ultimately, learning the language. Cross et al (1989) note that achieving comprehensive knowledge may be unrealistic, but professionals can develop skills in obtaining information to become cross-culturally competent.

In using the knowledge gained about one's self and another culture, the professional identifies their own personal values, customs, beliefs and behaviors that may lead to personal frustration in their work with the family. This facilitates the effective communication and work with the family in a culturally responsive manner. Lynch (1992) identified several characteristics that may help professionals improve communication, including flexibility, a tolerance for ambiguity, an openness to new learning, respect for others, and a willingness to examine and understand others' points of view (pp. 51-52).

Family-Centered and Strengths-based

The wraparound process is family-centered and recognizes that all families have strengths and capabilities, are resources for meeting its needs, and can be active participants (Dunst, Trivette, & Mott, 1994, p. 122). This process does not isolate the child from the family unit, but rather views the interrelationship of the child and the family as critical in working with that family to achieve their goals. In using a strengths-based approach the deficit mentality of service provision is eliminated. Instead, the process allows the family to identify and build on their strengths in meeting their needs, to establish goals for themselves, and to identify resources to achieve those goals. The family's values, cultural identity, preferences, and norms

are all incorporated into the strength-based approach. The team, including the family, then incorporates these goals into a plan of action. The team coordinator then helps broker the services identified in the plan.

Because the wraparound process includes all aspects of the child's life, schools, and teachers within the school, are involved. As a member of the team, the teacher will bring to the team information about the strengths of the child in the educational environment and assist in identifying expectations for the student in the school environment. When planning for the child's educational goals, the team focuses on the whole school experience, not only on academics. For example, the team may look at what supports might be needed for the student to participate in athletics or a school club, as well as what the student may need to participate with his typically developing peers in the general education classroom. Additionally, the team may work with the teachers as they would the family, using a strengths-based approach in helping the teachers to identify their strengths and needs as they work with the child in the school. Likewise, they will be involved in identifying resources, strategies, and supports that would assist them in meeting the child's goals (Eber, Nelson, & Miles, 1997).

The core principles in the wraparound process are all supported by the 1997 amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA '97, P.L. 105-017), which mandates increased parental involvement in the pre-referral, referral, evaluation, and planning process for identifying students who have special needs. They have input into the decisions about what additional data needs to be collected to determine eligibility or continued eligibility for services for their child, they are included in all meetings that deal with decisions concerning the child's special education program, and they are involved in progress reporting at least as often as families of typically developing children (Osher, 1997). Use of the wraparound process is an avenue for families and children to participate in planning for special

education services in meaningful ways.

Community-Based Supports

The third core value in the wraparound process is the concept that resources for families to meet their goals exist at the community level. The plan developed with the family incorporates both formal services and informal supports in the community from a wide variety of sources, rather than relying solely on agency-based services. Sources of support might include individuals (i.e. neighbors, relatives, babysitters), groups (i.e. worship communities, school groups, businesses), community programs and professionals (i.e. day care, libraries, community colleges, hospitals), and specialized professional services (i.e. health department, parent education programs, respite care) (Dunst, Trivette, & Deal, 1994). This shift moves the supports available to the family from the singular use of a system of services where professionals deliver services that are limited and involve eligibility criteria to a system that incorporates both formal and informal supports at the community level.

The school and its programs are sources of support for the family and the child. Special education programs, counseling, vocational education, and transition planning may all be components of the child and family's plan. Community-based resources to help the teacher meet his or her expectations and the child's goals may also be included.

This change in service delivery for children and families impacts the way professionals work with children and their families. The emphasis on family involvement, strengths-based approaches, and use of community-based supports and resources in ways that are culturally responsive calls for a major systems change. One way to create this systems change at the preservice level would be to have a shift in the focus of undergraduate students' curriculum. Included in the curriculum would be knowledge and skills to develop cross-cultural competence, to

involve the families in the educational process, and to develop strengths-based rather than deficit-based approaches. Preservice professionals would also develop skills in collaboration and knowledge about the community and resources within the community to become member of a wraparound team.

Undergraduate Education Curriculum Model

An example of a curriculum that embodies a systems change approach is being piloted in the undergraduate elementary education program at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. The program is a four-semester, cohort based model that is implemented both on campus and in Professional Development School (PDS) sites located in the community.

Table 1

4 Semester sequence of courses

1st Semester, Junior Year	**1st Semester, Senior Year**
Science Education Methods	Social Studies Methods
Children's Literature	Language Arts Methods
Inquiry Seminar I	Inquiry Seminar III
10 Hour Internship	10 Hour Internship
2nd Semester, Junior Year	**2nd Semester, Senior Year**
Mathematics Education Methods	Student Teaching and seminar
Reading Methods	
Inquiry Seminar II	
10 hour Internship	

Incoming Juniors are assigned to cohorts of 22-25 students. The

undergraduate elementary education majors experience all of their methods courses, seminars, internships and student teaching experiences as a cohort. They follow a prescribed sequence of courses in the department that includes methods courses in children's literature, reading, language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. They are involved in internships in a PDS for 10 hours each week for the first three semesters with a two hour inquiry seminar in conjunction with the internship. Each semester the inquiry seminar has a particular focus: Semester 1) self as teacher and classroom management, Semester 2) children with special learning needs, and Semester 3) classroom culture and diversity issues. During the final semester in the program, preservice teachers complete a 15 week, full-time student teaching experience in a PDS.

Faculty and doctoral students involved with the GIFTTS Project in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction in the School of Education at UNC-G identified key components about the wraparound process that needed to be incorporated into the existing curriculum for undergraduate elementary education majors. The CUI team identified five potential content strands that evolved from the literature: the child, the family, the teacher/school, agencies, and legal issues. After identifying the content strands, the CUI Team began to explore what preservice teachers needed to learn in order to become a wraparound process participant. Knowledge, skills and attitudes were identified for each content strand, activities and assessment strategies were created, and a rubric for assessing a final portfolio was developed. An integration point in existing course work was identified for each goal which was matched with the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) standards. (See Appendix for a comprehensive table for each strand).

The Child Strand

The Child strand focuses on what a elementary education preservice teacher

needs to know to successfully include children with behavior and emotional disabilities in a general education classroom. Knowledge about terminology used in special education, characteristics of children with behavior and emotional disabilities, and child development are included in this strand. Skills include integrating activities that promote social interaction, and the use of strategies, modifications, and accommodations that build on students' strengths. Valuing all children, developing understanding of the issues children with disabilities face in the classroom, and responding to children in ways that are supporting are also included.

The Family Strand

The Family strand focuses what the preservice teacher needs to develop in order to understand and work with the families of the children in the classroom. The goals include understanding and developing cross-cultural competence, expanding the definition of family, and describing family-centered planning. The strand also includes developing the ability to look at issues from different perspectives and understanding the issues families who have a child with disability may face. Preservice teachers also explore ways to include families in the school using a strengths-based approach.

The Teacher Strand

The Teacher strand focuses on the knowledge, skills, and attitudes a teacher will need in order to participate in a collaborative team meeting. The preservice teacher learns about the roles of other professionals within the school setting and how they work with the general education teacher and the child. Additionally, the strand includes an exploration of burnout and personal boundary issues and how they might affect the students in the classroom.

The Agency Strand

This strand explores the agencies involved in the wraparound process and it

examines non-agency sources of support at the community level. Agency terminology is included in this strand. Preservice teachers also explore the application process for services and talk with families about the consequences of being denied services.

Legal/Historical Strand

In this strand, students explore federal and state legislation that impacts students with disabilities and their families. Issues and responsibilities regarding suspected abuse and neglect reporting are addressed, and preservice teachers explore confidentiality and how it relates to teachers and interagency collaboration.

Implementation and Evaluation

The Department of Curriculum and Instruction is piloting the curriculum during the 1997-98 academic year with five elementary education cohorts. Three junior cohorts are participating in a full pilot of all of the goals and activities in the fall and spring semesters. Two senior cohorts participated in a partial pilot of activities in their Inquiry III seminar and their social studies methods course during the fall semester. Initially, a CUI GIFTTS team member demonstrates the use of each activity with a team at the integration point so that other team leaders and course faculty can then incorporate the activity into their curriculum in the future.

Evaluation of the pilot year will take place during the summer of 1998. Data were collected during the first semester from the junior and senior cohorts and is currently being collected from the junior cohorts. Sources of data for the evaluation include: 1) pre- and post-test measures on a belief survey about including children with disabilities in the general education classroom, 2) pre- and post-writing samples from a problem based learning activity that focuses on including students with disabilities, 3) student evaluations of each activity, 4) reflective responses to some activities, and 5) a graduate student research project that includes a single case study of one junior intern in an inclusion classroom. The CUI team, which has

evolved to include the department chair, three faculty members, and two doctoral students, will meet during the summer to examine results from the evaluation, to make modifications to the curriculum, and to finish preparations on a middle grades curriculum (to be piloted 1998-99).

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Appendix

Table 1

The Child Strand

Specific Understanding Objective	Activity	Assessment	Course
Recognize the range of characteristics a child with B/EH may exhibit	Observe a child identified as B/EH for at least 3 hours in a variety of settings in the school; Use case-based discussions to foster understanding of a child with B/EH in the general education classroom	Reflection on the observation: What were the child's strengths? interests? How might I use what I've learned in planning instruction for the student?	Inquiry Seminar II
Identify terms associated with special education	Create a running log of terms/definitions used in special education in N.C.		Inquiry Seminar II
Describe cognitive, language, social skill development of children who are typically developing	Observe a child who is typically developing. Use observation findings in conjunction with B/EH observation activity. Discuss similarities, differences.		Infant and Child Development, Inquiry Seminar II
Integrate school and classroom activities that promote social interaction	Lesson plan that incorporates cooperative learning activity		Inquiry Seminar III
Identify and include strategies, accommodations and modifications in lesson planning for students with behavioral and emotional disabilities	Presentation of model lesson. In groups, prepare a lesson plan for a small group	Observations during internship and student teaching	Inquiry Seminar II
Give feedback that is specific and supportive	Role playing; View video teaching case and chart reactive behaviors of students and responsive behaviors of teachers		Inquiry Seminar II
Use appropriate terminology and person-first language		Accountability in written assignments and oral presentations	Inquiry Seminar II, III

Table 2

The Family Strand

Specific Understanding Objective	Activity	Assessment	Course
Expand one's definition of family	Discussion of family structure; gather information about families of the children in the internship classroom	Lesson plan and classroom environment that incorporates an expanded definition of family	Social Studies methods
Recognize that becoming cross-culturally competence begins with self-awareness, involves studying other cultures, and includes making changes in how we prepare for working with families	Complete A Cultural Journey survey (Lynch) and discussion; explore the culture of a child in internship or student teaching. Discuss what one would do to prepare for a team meeting	Pre- and post- test: preparation for family conference with family from culture different from self	Social Studies methods
Understand how culture influences beliefs, values, and behaviors	Discussion of the Cultural Journey; explore personal culture	Journal about cross-cultural conflict they have experienced or are aware of	Social Studies methods, Inquiry Seminar III
Discuss the issues a family with a child with disabilities may have to address	Invite families to discuss their experiences living with a family member with disabilities; obtaining services for their family member	Reflect on obtaining services from schools and other agencies from parent perspective	Social studies methods, Inquiry Seminar III
Value all families' capacities and strengths	Identify strengths and brainstorm ways families can be involved with schools when presented with a scenario	Attitude assessment (pre- and post) 2nd semester	Social studies methods
Examine issues from different perspectives, including the parents'	Use of case about families to discuss issues		Social studies methods
Describe family-centered planning and the wraparound process	Identify benefits and disadvantages of wraparound process and "traditional" service delivery		Social studies methods, Inquiry Seminar III

Table 3

The Teacher Strand

Specific Understanding Objective	Activity	Assessment	Course
Describe six steps of collaboration	Role play collaboration with family and other agencies; Use collaboration with OSTE to address an issue in internship or student teaching	Document each step of role playing or consultation with OSTE; discuss frustrations and successes in the process	Inquiry Seminar II
Describe skills and expertise of other school personnel involved in the children's education	Interview OT, PT, speech/language therapist, counselor, ESOL teacher, Reading Recovery teacher, etc.		Inquiry Seminar II
Recognize personal boundary issues and dilemmas and how they affect students and teacher burnout	Brainstorm and discuss teacher roles and responsibilities; expand discussion to examine roles/responsibilities of other school personnel. How does the wraparound process affect the roles?	Write reflective essay at end of junior and seniors years. Examine for changes in perspectives	Inquiry Seminar I-III
Value all families' capacities and strengths	Invite families to discuss experiences trying to obtain services; Identify strengths and brainstorm ways families can be involved with the schools when presented with a scenario		Social Studies Methods, Seminar III

Table 4

The Agency Strand

Specific Understanding	Activity	Assessment	Course
Identify agencies involved with wraparound services and the services they provide	Overview of roles and services agencies provide; invite agency reps to discuss services they provide and limitations they face	Follow application process for services in several agencies. Discuss benefits of a wraparound process using a streamlined process	Inquiry Seminar III
Identify non-agency sources of support (resources) in a local community	When presented with a personal dilemma (i.e. you do not have enough food for your family), identify resources in the community that could help you		Inquiry Seminar III
Demonstrate awareness of agency acronyms	Jeopardy or Bingo type game	Create spreadsheet of agencies, acronyms, and functions	Inquiry Seminar III
Understand dynamics of being denied services or being placed on a registry/waiting list	From Family strand: Visiting families talk about their experiences with the system	Reflection on denial of services	Inquiry Seminar III
		Team meeting simulation involving families, and preservice professionals from several departments to develop a plan to meet this need .	

Table 5

The Historical/Legal Strand

Specific Understanding	Activity	Assessment	Course
Understand due process	Review the Parent's Rights Handbook from DPI		Inquiry Seminar II
Identify teacher's responsibilities and procedures for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect	Interview principal or counselor at PDS for school's policy regarding procedure; discuss teacher's legal responsibility		Inquiry Seminar II
Describe legislative mandates that impact children who receive special education services and discuss how families are included	Create timeline or graphic organizer of federal and state mandates (i.e. PL 94-142, IDEA, IDEA '97, ADA, etc)	Quiz	Inquiry Seminar II
Describe confidentiality as it relates to the teacher's role and interagency collaboration	Discussion about what confidentiality is, how to maintain it, what consequences can be for breaching it; Discuss how agencies deal with release of information	Sign statement of confidentiality; maintain confidentiality in writing and discussions	Inquiry Seminar I

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